

HOME	ABOUT	HOW DO I...	PUBLICATIONS	SUBSCRIBE	PIC OF THE DAY
NEWS	AIRCRAFT	EVENTS	OPINION	CLASSIFIEDS	Search this website ...

# Keeping the antiques flying, year after year

SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 BY [SPARKY BARNES SARGENT](#) — [5 COMMENTS](#)

Sunny Iowa skies, homemade pies, one-of-a-kind airplanes, and colorful aviators all mixed together this past Labor Day to create the special type of ambiance for which [Antique Airfield](#) is known.

Known by most as just Blakesburg, it's the kind of fly-in where pilots don't need radios. Red and green flags control the air traffic, and neatly-mowed grass cushions each and every landing.

And even if your ear isn't attuned to the different types of radial engines, you'll soon learn that there's no mistaking the sound of a six-cylinder Challenger engine laboring to keep a 1929 Curtiss Robin cabin monoplane aloft, or the roar of a 600-hp Pratt & Whitney radial as the replica "Mister" Mulligan zooms by!



**Jim Younkin's replica Howard DGA-6 "Mister" Mulligan announces its speedy arrival at Antique Airfield with the roaring voice of its 600-hp Pratt & Whitney.**

Though numerous aircraft were flying multiple times a day — buddy rides are popular at this event — it seemed as though Dan Wilkins' 1941 Waco UPF-7 and Ed Lachendro's Cub were continually airborne.



**John Ricciotti flew his 1934 Waco S3HD to Blakesburg from his home in Barrington, New Hampshire. NC14048 is the only one of its kind remaining, and was a frequent flier during the fly-in.**

Additionally, John Ricciotti's very rare 1934 Waco Model S3HD and Justin Niemyjski's 1946 Beech D18S were flying frequently throughout the days, joined by Russell William's 1938 Ryan SCW and many other aircraft in the early evenings. These fliers provided photographers with ample opportunities to record living history.





**Russell Williams of Bellevue, Washington, prepares to take the author up for a late-afternoon flight in NC18914, his 1938 Ryan SCW. The two aircraft flying overhead are "Mister" Mulligan and Mullicoupe. (Photo by Les Sargent. All other photos by Sparky Barnes Sargent)**

The **Antique Airplane Association/Airpower Museum's** (AAA/APM) Invitational Fly-In allows its members to come together annually and enjoy the camaraderie of grassroots aviation. While it was "old home" week for hundreds of folks who went "Back to Blakesburg," there were numerous first-timers who were welcomed into the fold as well. Visitors may join AAA upon arrival at the grass field.

The old timers noticed many improvements to the AAA/APM building and grounds this year. Thanks to staff and volunteer laborers, new hangar doors and a new sheet metal façade were installed on the main museum hangar, and a new roof was installed on the annex. The exterior wall of Powell Hall was rebuilt; the Library of Flight's porch and various signs were freshly painted; and 100 yards of mulch that was donated by B&B Bedding of Oskaloosa was spread on the high foot-traffic areas. New gravel was spread on the driveways/roads, and a newly-constructed BTB Airlines "Gate #1" was recently installed, in addition to various landscaping beautifications. Much of the work was facilitated by generous donations to the 2015 APM Capital Improvement Fund.



**The new BTB Airlines Gate frames Terry Bowden's "St. Louis Robin," in which Dale Jackson and Forrest O'Brien set an endurance record of 17-½ days aloft over St. Louis in 1929.**

The fly-in theme for 2015 was "Record Breakers — Featuring Curtiss Robin and Stinson 108 Aircraft," and two Curtiss Robins and 17 Stinson 108s flew into Antique Airfield.

The grand total of airplanes sparkling under the late summer sun this year was 365, which more than doubled last year's rain-soaked 152. The delectable range of aircraft included: a Mister Mulligan replica, a Mullicoupe, three open-cockpit Meyers OTWs, a Fairchild 71, Rose Parrakeets, Howard DGAs, Stearmans, Taylorcrafts, as well as Aeronca Chiefs and Champs, and various Piper, Luscombe, and Waco models.





**This brilliant orange 1941 Meyers OTW was one of three OTWs at the fly-in, and is registered to Gregory Schildberg of Casey, Iowa.**

Legacy and modern homebuilt aircraft were also on the flight line, including a Bentzen Sport, Wittman Tailwinds, a Cabin Ace SJ, a Pober Pixie, and seven Hatz biplanes.



**This pretty 2014 Pober Pixie is owned by Rick Gritters and Tom Vander Linden of Pella, Iowa. N321PX is**



**powered by a Continental A-65-8.**

Morning coffee was served with a smile by members of the Michigan AAA Chapter at Dave Warren's Coffee House onsite, and the Blakesburg Historical Society offered sumptuous homemade blackberry, apple, gooseberry, peach, strawberry-rhubarb, blueberry, and cherry pies, along with homemade vanilla ice cream.

Classic Aviation of Pella, Iowa, kept its fuel truck busy pumping fuel, and the Hy-Vee did its usual fine job of providing meals at the 24th Fighter Squadron Mess Hall. The APM Fly Market offered its eclectic array of aircraft parts for sale, while vendors were selling items including commemorative fly-in t-shirts and caps, books, sunglasses, aeronautical treasures, and historical magazines.



**The Best Corbin Aircraft award went to Steve McGuire of Ponca City, Okla., for his 2013 experimental Cabin Ace SJ.**

Refreshing libations were available at the Pilot's Pub to quench aviators' thirst after days filled with buddy rides and hangar flying, and the Runway Cinema screened classic aviation movies in the evenings.



**The first annual Ladies Love Taildraggers Ladies Choice award went to Harve and Carolyn Applegate of Queen City, Missouri, for their 1947 Franklin-powered Stinson 108-1. Carolyn and her daughters, Shalyn Applegate and Taryn Pemberton, each fly the Stinson, which also received the Neo Classic 1946 to 1956 Grand Champion award.**

AAA members enjoyed visiting with 91-year-young AAA Founder and Chairman Emeritus Bob Taylor throughout the fly-in as he circulated through the crowds. His son Brent Taylor, who was elected as AAA president in January and has been working to ensure a smooth transition of leadership for the organization, kept a watchful eye to make sure that runway and fly-in operations were handled safely and efficiently.





**A glorious western sky creates a glowing backdrop for the featured Stinson 108s.**

The 2015 “Record Breakers” fly-in was a resounding success, and attendee’s memories have no doubt been happily recorded in their collective “logbook of life.”



**Get the Pulse of Aviation – FREE – delivered to your inbox...**

**SUBSCRIBE**

## Comments

**Steve Owens says**

OCTOBER 2, 2015 AT 5:31 PM

Simply the best all around Fly-in. Wonderful time and great planes! These folks know how to put together a great event!

[Reply](#)**Eric Ziegler says**

OCTOBER 1, 2015 AT 10:58 PM

Curious...what significant records were set by Stinson ("Voyager/Station Wagon") 108's?

[Reply](#)**Brent Taylor says**

OCTOBER 2, 2015 AT 7:41 AM

Eric,

Over the last several years the AAA/APM Invitational Fly-in has had a theme (Air Mail Days, Corporate Wings, Stars of the Sky & Screen etc) as well as featuring one or two type specific aircraft (Great Lakes, Interstate, Howard, Monocoupe etc.)

While we try to select the featured aircraft to compliment the Fly-in theme, it does not always happen to work out that way.

Having the Stinson 108 as a featured aircraft this year is an example of that.

Brent Taylor  
President AAA

[Reply](#)



**Jim D says**

OCTOBER 1, 2015 AT 6:31 AM

sure enjoyed the fly-in. Rest to meet Sparky. Thanks for the article, captures the spirit!

[Reply](#)**Judy Birchler says**

OCTOBER 1, 2015 AT 5:41 AM

This is a wonderful article that reminds me why I love going to Blakesburg. Beautiful pictures of some remarkable airplanes, especially the sunset shot!

[Reply](#)

## Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked \*

Name \*

Email \*

Website

Comment

POST COMMENT

☐ Notify me of follow-up comments by email.

---

STAY INFORMED!

---

## The Pulse of Aviation

Our daily digest of aviation news and bits, delivered to your email inbox each morning.

**Name**

First

Last

---

**Email \***

SUBMIT



---

## IFLIGHTPLANNER

---

### Airport & Route Lookup

Airport

GO

Route

GO

### My Airports

**Sign in or create an iFlightPlanner account to plan flights and view your favorite airports here!**

**SIGN IN** OR

**CREATE AN ACCOUNT**

---

» [The iFlightPlanner Widget](#)

---

Copyright © 2015 · News Pro Theme on Genesis Framework · WordPress · [Log in](#)